REMARKS

Claims 1-11 have been canceled. Claim 12 has been amended to correct a clerical error. New claims 13-18, drawn to the subject matter of canceled claims 4-11, have been added. The application now includes claims 12-18.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 12-18 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Claims 1-12 were rejected as being obvious over a combination of U.S. Patent 6,798,767 to Alexander in view of U.S. Patent 6,731,625 to Eastep. Claims 1-11 have now been canceled. Claim 12 and new claims 13-18 have been added to further highlight differences between the invention and a combination of Alexander and Eastep (to the extent such a combination can be made). None of claims 12-18 would be obvious over a combination of Alexander and Eastep, or any combination of references of record in the case.

The principle reference to Alexander is directed to a telephone communication system that allows multiple telephones to be rung in response to an incoming call (see column 2, lines 9-12). Alexander shows multiple telephones at different extensions (e.g., 22 and 23) connected to a LAN (20a) that is connected to the Internet (40). Alexander also shows phones connected at different offices through a gateway (52, 64a, or 64b) or WAN 30. In practice, the called party could be at a number of different offices, at different locations within a single office, or be available by cell phone (67). A call manager 26b includes a listing of one or more alternate numbers for any particular person (or presumably team member, e.g., tech support). As noted by the Examiner, column 9, lines 20-23, indicates that IP telephony devices can be connected to the LAN, and that these devices are assigned an IP address. Of course, in the context of Alexander, these devices simply constitute one more telephone which would act as an alternate number for a particular person. Thus, when a call is received, the call manager can ring one or more telephones at a variety of locations so that the called person can receive the call (presumably wherever he or she is (i.e., in a different building, different city, or on the road (mobile)).

Alexander lacks many of the features of the claimed invention, and some

of the conclusions drawn in the prior office actions are simply incorrect. With reference to Alexander at column 9, lines 20 et seq., it can be seen that the IP address of an IP telephony device is assigned using Dynamic Host Control Protocol (DHCP). With reference to Figures 4a and 4b of Alexander, it can be seen that each phone number is assigned to a device name or group (4a), and each device is associated with an IP address (4b). The Examiner suggests that the tables of Figures 4a and 4b can be combined. The result would be a phone number being associated with an IP address. However, this overlooks the claimed features and operations on how the IP address is allocated to the telephone sets. The claimed invention, by contrast to Alexander, is focused on a system and controller which sets an extension and an IP address to a telephone set (see object sentence bridging pages 1 and 2 of the application).

The invention requires a telephone controller and plurality of telephone sets connected to a LAN. A transmitter transmits a request from one of the telephone sets via the LAN to the telephone controller requesting and IP address be allocated to the requesting telephone set. A receiver at the telephone controller receives the message, and through a control circuit and an IP address allocation circuit, an ID comprising a domain name and an extension of the telephone set is generated and an IP address is allocated to the requesting telephone. The associated ID and IP address are stored in a storage medium and the telephone set is notified of its ID.

Alexander fails to show the transmitter, receiver, control circuit, and IP address allocation circuit configured and operating as described in the present application.

Eastep has been cited as teaching the use of an e-mail address as a unique identifier of a person. Eastep is said to describe a directory services for allowing a caller to identify the IP address of a called party using the unique identifier (column 83, lines 34-55). Careful review of the cited passage shows that Eastep contemplates that users, for a fee with recurring charges, would register with the directory service and would make known to the directory system whenever they connect to the Internet and want to be available for calls. In short, in Eastep, in connection with the directory service, a user pays to have registered his or her IP address and to have the notification when he or she is available to receive

telephone calls by VoIP.

At the outset Alexander and Eastep are unrelated. Alexander is directed to a system which assures somebody or entity is reachable, no matter what telephone he or she is at. Eastep describes a communication system, and, at least with respect to the directory service identified by the Examiner, describes a system where a user can pay to have an IP address known to a directory service and to have the directory service know when the registered user is available to take telephone calls (i.e., in Eastep, the person is reachable when he or she is connected to the Internet, and in Alexander the person is reachable at any time and any place).

To the extent Alexander and Eastep can be combined, a system would exist where the person's e-mail address is one more address that can be "rung" when a caller is looking for the person. That is, a caller would call for the person, and if the person was not available on his mobile or at his Dallas location (see Alexander), but the person was connected to the Internet and had a registered address (see Eastep), the person would be contacted by VoIP through the Internet.

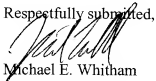
Thus, no combination of Alexander and Eastep makes obvious the concept of a control circuit which assigns an ID comprising a domain name and an extension, or an IP address allocation circuit which allocates an IP address to a requesting telephone set, as is contemplated by the claimed invention.

In view of the above, claims 12-18 should be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance at an early date is requested.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

A provisional petition is hereby made for any extension of time necessary for the continued pendency during the life of this application. Please charge any fees for such provisional petition and any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041.

Respectfully submitted,



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